

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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DIA WASHDC
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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PINT, GR

SUBJECT: GOG ANNOUNCES FIRM MEASURES TO CONTROL FUTURE
DEMONSTRATIONS AND REPEATS ITS CONDEMNATION OF
APRIL 21 INCIDENTS

REF: ATHENS 3112

1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS CHAIRED HIGH-LEVEL
MINISTERIAL MEETING APRIL 22 TO DISCUSS APRIL 21 INCIDENTS.
GOG ANNOUNCED A SERIES OF DECISIONS WERE TAKEN. THESE
INCLUDE: INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION PERPETRATORS OF
"PREMEDIATED" APRIL 21 INCIDENTS INCLUDING LEADERS OF
LEFTIST EXTREMIST GROUP (EKKE) WHICH IS CONSIDERED
PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VIOLENCE THAT OCCURRED.
ALSO, ARTICLE OF CONSTITUTION PROHIBITING OUTDOOR
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GATHERINGS WHICH ENDANGER PUBLIC SECURITY WILL BE

ENFORCED IN THE FUTURE. IN A SEPARATE STATEMENT GOG CAME DOWN HEAVILY ON UNRULY DEMONSTRATIONS WHICH THREATEN DEMOCRACY AND CHARACTERIZED AS HARMFUL AND UNFAIR ASSAULT ON U.S. EMBASSY WHICH REPRESENTS "A GREAT COUNTRY WHOSE PEOPLE, PRESS AND CONGRESS DISPLAY BEST POSSIBLE FEELINGS TOWARDS GREECE".

2. UNDER SECRETARY FOR PRESS LAMBRIAS AND ATHENS POLICE CHIEF MET WITH PRESS CORPS LATE IN THE DAY TO BRIEF JOURNALISTS. LATTER LINKED EKKE (REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST MOVEMENT OF GREECE), WHICH HAD EARLIER CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY ITSELF (REFTEL) WITH ASSAULT ON EMBASSY. PRESS REPORTED GREEK AMBASSADOR ALEXANDRAKIS HAD CALLED AT DEPARTMENT TO EXPRESS OFFICIAL GOG REGRET. ANDREAS PAPANDREOUS CRITICIZED POLICE FOR NEGLIGENCE AND GOG'S "PRAISE" FOR U.S. END SUMMARY.

3. FOLLOWING SPECIAL MINISTERIAL MEETING CHAIRED BY PM CARAMANLIS ON APRIL 22, GOG ANNOUNCED IT HAD DECIDED TO TAKE FOLLOWING MEASURES: (A) TO LAUNCH INVESTIGATION AND TO INSTITUTE CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST THOSE WHO ENGAGED IN VIOLENCE, DAMAGED FOREIGN PROPERTY, CAUSED INJURIES TO POLICE AND OTHER DEMONSTRATORS OR BROKE OTHER LAWS; (B) TO PROCEED WITH PROSECUTION OF LEADERS OF A LEFTIST EXTREMIST ORGANIZATION (EKKE) WHOSE PROVACATIVE PROCLAMATION ISSUED TO PRESS ASSUMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR APRIL 21 INCIDENTS; (C) TO IMPLEMENT FULLY ARTICLE 10 OF CONSTITUTION (1952) WHICH STATES THAT OUTDOOR GATHERINGS MAY BE PROHIBITED SHOULD THEY ENDANGER PUBLIC SECURITY; AND (D) THAT ANY DISOBEDIENCE TOWARD DECISION OF PUBLIC PROSECUTOR OR TO POLICE AUTHORITIES WILL BE LIABLE UNDER THE LAW.

4. AT SAME TIME GOG ISSUED FURTHER STATEMENT REPEATING ITS EARLIER CONDEMNATION (ATHENS 3091) OF DISRESPECT FOR PUBLIC ORDER BY ANARCHIST ELEMENTS. EXCERPTS FROM APRIL 22 STATEMENT FOLLOW:

--GOG IS DETERMINED TO USE ALL MEANS AT ITS DISPOSAL TO NEUTRALIZE THREAT CAUSED TO DEMOCRATIC REGIME... BY ANARCHIST DEMONSTRATIONS AND MOB RULE.
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--MANY INDIVIDUALS HAVE FAILED TO SHOW, AND MONDAY'S INCIDENTS WERE THE WORST (EXAMPLE), BASIC REGARD FOR FREEDOM WHICH IN DEMOCRACY IMPLIES RESPECT FOR LAW AND ORDER.

--MONDAY'S IMPROPRIETIES ARE MORALLY, POLITICALLY AND NATIONALLY INADMISSIBLE BECAUSE THEY OBSTRUCT NORMAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC LIFE AND CAUSE NATION TO APPEAR TO BE IN STATE OF ANARCHY. MOREOVER THEY UNDERMINE

NATIONAL EFFORT TO FACE GREAT EXTERNAL PROBLEMS...

"UGLY DEEDS AND ASSAULT ON FOREIGN EMBASSIES NOT ONLY LOWER THE STANDARD OF OUR PEOPLE BUT ARE ALSO HARMFUL TO THE NATIONAL INTEREST. IN PARTICULAR MONDAY'S ASSAULT ON THE U.S. EMBASSY, CARRIED OUT BY LEFTIST EXTREMIST GROUPS, WAS NOT ONLY HARMFUL BUT ALSO UNFAIR. FOR IT WAS CARRIED OUT AGAINST THE EMBASSY OF A GREAT COUNTRY WHOSE PEOPLE, PRESS AND CONGRESS DISPLAY THE BEST POSSIBLE FEELINGS TOWARD GREECE."

--ANARCHIST DEMONSTRATIONS ENDANGER DEMOCRACY WHICH THE NATION HAS ACQUIRED AFTER SO MANY ADVENTURES AND COUPLED WITH UNTIMELY OR INSTIGATED STRIKES FORM AN ELEMENT WHICH RETARDS NATIONAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND PROGRESS. "GOVERNMENT FEELS IT REFLECTS THE DESIRE OF THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE IN CALLING ON ALL PARTIES, ORGANIZATIONS AND THE PRESS NOT ONLY TO STOP ENCOURAGING IN ANY MANNER, DIRECT OR INDIRECT, SUCH DANGEROUS MANIFESTATIONS, BUT...TO CONDEMN THEM WITHOUT RESERVATION." (SEE FBIS 221910Z FOR FULL TEXT.)

5. IN LATER PRESS CONFERENCE HELD JOINTLY BY UNDER SECRETARY FOR PRESS AND INFORMATION LAMBRIAS AND ATHENS POLICE CHIEF PAPAGEORGIOU, LATTER PROVIDED CHRONOLOGY OF APRIL 21 DEMONSTRATION INCLUDING ATTACK AGAINST EMBASSY WHICH TRACKS CLOSELY WITH OUR INFORMATION AS REPORTED PREVIOUSLY. PAPAGEORGIOU SAID "THOSE WHO ATTACKED THE EMBASSY NUMBERED BETWEEN 200-250. THE DIFFICULTY IN REPULSING THEM LAY IN FACT THAT THEY FORMED SPEARHEAD OF A LARGE MASS OF OVER 3,000 DEMONSTRATORS WHO CHARGED CARRYING POSTER OF EKKE AND WHO HAD ALSO BROUGHT WITH THEM TWO FLAGS WHICH THEY BURNED OUTSIDE EMBASSY." PAPAGEORGIOU SAID POLICE FORCE GUARDING EMBASSY HAD BEEN ADEQUATE BUT IT HAD PULLED BACK TO AVOID LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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USING VIOLENCE OR CLUBS WHICH WOULD HAVE CAUSED A LARGE NUMBER OF CASUALTIES. LAMBRIAS REMARKED THAT DEMONSTRATION STAGED TO MARK AN EVIL ANNIVERSARY HAD DEGENERATED INTO A NUMBER OF UNPLEASANT INCIDENTS WHICH WERE HARMFUL TO NATIONAL ECONOMIC INTERESTS AND TOURISM.

6. ATHENS PRESS AND RADIO-TV ALSO REPORTED WIDELY THAT GREEK AMBASSADOR ALEXANDRAKIS HAD CALLED ON DEPARTMENT TO EXPRESS REGRET OVER "UGLY INCIDENTS AT U.S. EMBASSY" AND THAT AMBASSADOR KUBISCH HAD MET WITH FM BITSIOS ON APRIL 22 TO EXPRESS HIS VIEWS ON THE INCIDENTS AT THE EMBASSY.

7. AN ADDITIONAL PRESS STATEMENT WAS ALSO ISSUED BY PASOK'S CHAIRMAN ANDREAS PAPANDREOU WHO

SCORED POLICE AUTHORITIES FOR FAILING TO PROVIDE PROPER
PROTECTION TO THE U.S. EMBASSY. HE ALSO CRITICIZED THE
GOG FOR THE NEW MEASURES IT ANNOUNCED WHICH "ARE TANTAMOUNT
TO ABOLITION OF RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO TAKE PART IN PUBLIC
GATHERINGS." IN ADDITION PAPANDREOU CRITICIZED GREEK GOVERNMENT
FOR ITS FAVORABLE REFERENCE TO AMERICAN PEOPLE, CONGRESS,
AND PRESS AND INDICATED SURPRISE AT GOG'S PRAISE FO
ANOTHER GOVERNMENT WHICH "WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR SEVEN-YEAR
DICTATORSHIP, BETRAYAL OF CYPRUS AND MASSACRE OF
GREEK CYPRIOTS."
KUBISCH

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